

Message Text

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S E C R E T JERUSALEM 01750

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1&2
TAGS: PBOR, MARR, UNSC, IS, LE
SUBJ: SIILASVUO'S GLOOM

REF: JERUSALEM 1746

SUMMARY: WHEN I SAW SIILASVUO JUNE 27, HE WAS GLOOMY AND BITTER. HE RESENTS APPOINTMENT OF SAUNDERS AS SYG SPECIAL REP IN BEIRUT AND SEES US HAND BEHIND THIS MOVE. HIS RELATIONS WITH JONAH HAVE DETERIORATED TO AN ALL TIME LOW. END SUMMARY

1. AFTER COVERING SUBSTANTIVE GROUND REPORTED REFTEL, SIILASVUO LAUNCHED INTO A LONG AND BITTER RECITAL OF HIS PROBLEMS WITH JONAH. REPORTEDLY, JONAH ACCUSED HIM OF INACCURATE REPORTING AND WITHHOLDING INFORMATION. JONAH APPARENTLY WAS EMBARRASSED BY DESCRIPTION IN SYG'S REPORT OF GOL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HADDAD WHICH WAS BASED ON BOUTROS' CONVERSATION WITH SIILASVUO. THIS CHARACTERIZATION DID NOT JIBE WITH SUBSEQUENT STATEMENTS BY PRIME MINISTER HOSS. SIILASVUO SAID HE COULD NOT HELP IT IF GOL SPOKE WITH DIFFERENT VOICES AND COMMENTED HE SHOULD HAVE OPPOSED EITHER THE INCLUSION OF BOUTROS' QUOTE OR THE ISSUANCE OF THE ENTIRE REPORT.

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2. SIILASVUO OBVIOUSLY RESENTED THE APPOINTMENT OF SAUNDERS. HE QUESTIONS WHETHER SAUNDERS HAS THE REQUISITE POLITICAL SKILLS AND IS AFRAID HE WILL BECOME ENMESHED IN LEBANESE FACTUAL INFIGHTING. SIILASVUO, IN PASSING, SAID HE UNDERSTOOD UNSYG BUFFUM (I.E. THE US) ADVOCATED SAUNDERS' APPOINTMENT.

3. SIILASVUO INDICATED RELATIONS BETWEEN HIM AND JONAH BECAME SO STRAINED THAT HE WALKED OUT OF A MEETING. HE ALSO DECLINED TO ACCOMPANY JONAH TO FOREIGN MINISTRY FOR APPOINTMENT WITH RON (DESCRIBED AS AN ACRIMONIOUS EXCHANGE) AND TO NAQOURA AND BEIRUT.

4. EARLIER, SIILASVUO TOLD ME ISRAELIS HAD INFORMED HIM THAT AT A SOCIAL FUNCTION IN NEW YORK JONAH HAD COMMENTED TO A MEMBER OF THE ISRAELI DELEGATION THAT ERSKINE WAS INCOMPETENT AND SIILASVUO LACKED POLITICAL JUDGEMENT.

5. COMMENT: SIILASVUO IS FEELING PARTICULARLY ISOLATED AT THE MOMENT. URQUHART IS ON LEAVE AND HIS RELATIONS WITH GUYER HAVE ALWAYS BEEN BAD. NOW COMMUNICATIONS WITH JONAH HAS BROKEN DOWN. MOREOVER, PRIETO IS ALSO ON A MONTHS LEAVE. WHILE SIILASVUO IS SOMETHING OF A PRIMA DONNA, HE DOES HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH ISRAEL AND THE CONFRONTATION STATES. HE IS ALSO WELL DISPOSED TOWARD THE US. IF TRUE, I WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO ASSURE HIM THAT THE US WAS NOT BEHIND THE APPOINTMENT OF SAUNDERS AND TO EXPRESS OUR ADMIRATION FOR HIS KEY ROLE IN GETTING UNIFIL LAUNCHED.

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